An honest band for difficult times: Shaving by Chewing on Tinfoil

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Chewing on Tinfoil is a five-piece punk and ska band from Tallaght in Dublin, Ireland.

A fantastic live act, they write catchy, compelling and thoughtful songs. With two lead vocalists, two guitars, bass, drums and piano, they have a rich sound with memorable melodies, harmonies and a brilliant rhythm section backing it all up.

In November 2010 they were invited to the BBC's Maida Vale studios in London to record for the Radio One Punk Show. In February 2011 they toured the US East Coast and last summer they toured the UK, playing the 2,000 Trees festival. They are currently writing and recording a seven-track album, due out later this year.

Shaving is a five track EP and their second major release. Many of the lyrics deal with problems of everyday life, the honesty and thoughtfulness of which set the band apart from many of their peers and mainstream artists.

Musically, every track on this EP is excellent.

"The White Washed Blues" starts with a piano intro, a melodic punk verse, anthemic chorus ("Cut me up, tear me down!"), changing on the second verse to a ska rhythm, back to the catchy chorus, into a stabby bridge with a spoken word piece overlaying it. On paper, it sounds like a collision of too many different sounds, but it still works and forms the stick-in-your-head "single" of the EP.

Lyrically, "Forty Shades of Grey" stands out, with its look at working class life through the eyes of a pensioner talking to a youth. There are a variety of lead guitar riffs, but a ska rhythm gives a sense of tenderness and solidarity: "There is no baby born in this life that is better than you, there is no feudal forced agenda in the womb, it's true."

The song decries the lack of opportunity for youth in post-recession Ireland:

"Beside my college is an unemployment office, there's a nightclub next to a funeral home. Sometimes it's in one door and it's out the other..."

The song's bittersweet chorus is defiant:

"We have all been down, but we'll get up again."

"Uprooted and Booted" is a danceable ska track, taking a wry look at the end of a relationship.

"I Was Here but I Disappear" is a slower reggae song, dealing with economic constraint and lack of opportunity—when friends are out seeing the world and you feel trapped in your hometown.

The last and title track on the EP is "Shaving", cathartic and moving, about growing up, dealing with self-harm and suicide. The dark subject matter, however, never feels depressing due to the fast delivery and melodies of the song.

Chewing on Tinfoil take issues and ideas seriously, but they are not po-faced with it. If you compare the EP to their first album, *Get Rich or Try Dying* (parodying Hip-Hop artist 50-Cent), it is clear that their sound has become more dynamic, innovative and unique.

You can listen to Chewing on Tinfoil and download most of what they've recorded online at:

http://chewingontinfoil.bandcamp.com/

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